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STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

"SHAPE, RESPOND, PREPARE": RELIEVING CURRENT PRESSURE AND SPEEDING TRANSFORMATION

BY

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"Shape, Respond, Prepare": Relieving Current Pressure and Speeding Transformation

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ABSTRACT

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"Shape, Respond, Prepare": Relieving Current Pressure and Speeding Transformation

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The author examines the tensions that the current two-MTW model produces within the "Shape, Respond, Prepare" strategy, and offers recommendations for the modification of that model, the employment of reserve component forces to support it, and the potential for consolidation of force enhancers or "critical enablers" into the joint arena to support both a MTW model and the process of military transformation.

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"SHAPE, RESPOND, PREPARE": RELIEVING CURRENT PRESSURE AND SPEEDING TRANSFORMATION

GENESIS OF THE CURRENT FORCE STRUCTURE

Following the end of the Cold War and the subsequent draw-down of US military forces, the Department of Defense has directed or supported a decade-long series of studies to determine the future of our Armed Forces in light of a dramatically different world. Beginning with the Base Force Review in 1991, this process continued through the 1993 Bottom Up Review (BUR); the 1995 Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces (CORM, or White Report); and the 1996 Military Force Structure Review Act which mandated the National Defense Panel. Throughout this debate, the established standard for required military means was this: sufficient forces required to deter and defeat opponents in two major theater wars. In reality, this "sizing" function for U.S. force structure has not changed radically since the end of World War II. The 1998 National Security Strategy, as well as the National Military Strategy and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review, clearly articulated the requirement to prosecute two major theater wars in two distant theaters in overlapping timeframes. Each policy document argued that a two-MTW capability is the minimum necessary means to achieve the "Shape, Respond, Prepare" strategy of engagement and enlargement.

No matter what semantics or rules of thumb we apply for force sizing--whether they be major theaters of war, lesser regional contingencies, smaller scale contingencies, or military operations other than war (MOOTW) or any combination of them--the U.S. armed forces have been struggling for some time to meet them all. The purpose of this paper is to review the current policies that drive U.S. force structure, examine them in light of the research on future trends in warfare, and offer recommendations for modification of our current two- MTW paradigm.

CURRENT POLICY

The objectives of the current two-MTW policy are plainly stated. If an enemy perceives that we are decisively engaged in major theater conflict in one distant global region, he may use that opportunity to his advantage in another region. We must therefore have the force structure in place to prosecute one major conflict while defeating a second enemy's aggression in another theater or region in near simultaneous timeframes. The further objective is to maintain sufficient force structure as a hedge against greater threats than anticipated, such as the introduction of weapons of mass destruction or other asymmetric means. This force structure is also intended to provide sufficient capabilities to "shape" the international environment through military peacetime engagement, while simultaneously maintaining the ability to "respond" to peacetime contingency requirements or conventional conflict.

Based on our escalating rate of involvement in MOOTW missions, one could argue that we currently have an ends-means mismatch in that our forces are over-committed and spread too widely to effectively respond to a two-MTW scenario. One could also argue that we clearly have a ways-means

mismatch, that is, we are using the wrong tool for the wrong job. We are using the military too much in proportion to other instruments of power, and we are using them in conditions to which they are currently ill suited.

The risk to sustaining this level of force structure is that, as the post-Cold War era of global engagement is unfolding, the demands of "shaping" and "responding" are negating the military's ability to "prepare now" for future demands. As the National Defense Panel study points out, the current force structure is rapidly becoming an inhibitor to transformation. Too long a delay in getting on with the transformation of the military will force us to continue to spend unnecessary resources on a force designed for the dangers of the Cold War and not the dangers envisioned in the next 25 years. The significant increase in Operations and Maintenance dollars required for ongoing MOOTW and peacetime contingency operations, at a time when our Defense budget is shrinking, will continue to push procurement further back on the priority list.

Furthermore, the two-MTW construct could leave the services vulnerable to deep, immediate cuts if one of the major contingencies resolves itself before the military's transformation strategy is in place². As Jeffrey Record comments, "... an army sized and structured for big conventional wars will be increasingly difficult to justify as a warfighting instrument." ³ The unlikely contingency of two simultaneous wars puts greater risk on long-term security.

FUTURE PROJECTIONS

As the National Defense Panel asserted, "...it is our judgment that our current force structure is sufficient for the regional threats that we see today." However, they also identified a number of future challenges with implications for our future force structure needs. They saw information attacks, in which an adversary exploits our growing dependence on computer information technology, as a looming threat. Another is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to include nuclear, biological, and chemical means. Space operations expansion to space-based offensive and defensive weapons will add another significant dimension to warfare. With the shift in military strategy from forward-basing to power projection, the absence of access to forward bases will present another substantial challenge. A related challenge will be the probability that our armed forces will need to conduct deep inland operations. Finally, the NDP saw the impact of mass population and the resulting demands of urban warfare and refugee operations on future force structure needs.

In examining those future challenges, The National Defense Panel made four key findings with respect to future force structure. First, they determined that current force structure and command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) may be inadequate for future battle. They viewed the integration of and access to intelligence as key. Second, they argued that current force structure cannot be dismantled too quickly for fear of risking the present, but also that it is rapidly becoming an inhibitor to military transformation. Third, they foresaw a greater necessary reliance on a fully integrated reserve component, as is already the case with the Air Force Reserve. Fourth, they contended that future

operations will force a greater reliance on joint, interagency, and coalition operations (with particular emphasis on interagency demands).

Another future trend will probably be a continuing increase in MOOTW missions, particularly in light of the trend toward intrastate conflict. But many of the MOOTW and complex contingency requirements we've participated in lately put the greatest demands on what the former Vice Chairman, Admiral Owens, dubbed the "four great enablers"- intelligence, logistics [including transport], communications, and medical services. ⁶ Another futurist sees the greatest positive contributions that conventional forces bring to the MOOTW arena being logistics, transport, communications and surveillance (intelligence). ⁷ These same resources are those which are in greatest demand in shaping the international environment through the strengthening of coalitions and alliances. As the QDR points out, the greatest stress produced by our current strategy has been and will probably continue to be born by "low density/high demand" units. This stress will be further compounded in the event of major theater war by poor positioning of transport assets to redeploy these disparate assets. Furthermore, our increasing future reliance on alliances and coalitions will come with a price: our coalition partners will continue to count on us for our state-of-the-art communications, intelligence, logistics, transport, and medical support.⁸

In summary, the forces and trends that will have significant impact on the current two-MTW construct are: decreasing budgets; expanding humanitarian interests; the continuing complexity of coalition warfare and MOOTW; and voracious demands on the "four great enablers." There are four implications for future force structure that can be derived from these forces and trends that are at work. First, future challenges will place greater demands on the full integration of reserve components. Second, there will be a need for a much more institutionalized system of interagency coordination. Third, the U.S. armed forces need to begin redirecting resources as quickly as is feasible toward the organizations, technologies, and operational concepts necessary for transformation. And, last, they will require significant integration of intelligence, communications, transportation, and logistics.

CRITICISM OF THE CURRENT POLICY

As a general statement of our current level of commitment, one could argue that "shaping" the international environment is hampering our ability to "respond" in the event of a major crisis, and also our ability to "prepare now" for the demands of the future. As another author might argue, it appears that again we have neglected the need for substantive long-range planning due to our lack of formalized interagency structures and our preoccupation with the short-term.⁹ In contrast to the QDR's support of the current two-MTW construct, the position of the National Defense Panel is opposed. In their opinion, it is a force protection mechanism, not a strategy. In light of the threats and challenges they foresee, The NDP concluded "…we believe that the current and planned structure, doctrine, and strategy…will not be adequate to meet the challenges of the future." ¹⁰

In his critique of present day force planning, Jeffrey Record offers several criticisms of the two-MTW model. In his view, the two-MTW scenario is historically improbable. It ignores the decline of "large

interstate warfare" in general, and the declining conventional capabilities of Iraq and North Korea in particular. He argues that the model demands a currently unaffordable force structure. Referring to the fact that the two-MTW model has been around in some form since the beginning of the Cold War, Record believes that it substitutes comfortable familiarity for critical thinking. He further contends that the two-MTW model promotes adversarial development of asymmetric threats. Finally, he argues that it neglects the demands of military operations other than war (MOOTW).

There are particular criticisms of the two-MTW model in light of the proliferation of MOOTW. Whether US forces are committed to flying "racetracks" over Iraqi airspace or pulling ground observer duty in the Sinai or Macedonia, they all must invest significant time and resources upon redeployment to re-hone their core warfighting skills. ¹² To compound that problem, the de facto tiering of forces often causes the next unit in line for rotation, often a lesser-tier unit, to borrow manpower and systems from sister elements to meet acceptable readiness standards for the mission. Frequently, it is not the combat power of weapons systems that is in demand. As Record stated, "Most of these [MOOTW] missions require either little in the way of conventional military power or the employment of substantial conventional forces in non-traditional (and heroic) ways. Many elevate the value of combat support and combat service support above combat itself, which in turn elevates the relative importance of the Reserve vis-a-vis Active Components." ¹³

There are proponents of the two-MTW construct. As Dennis Ippolitto points out, the logical sequencing of policy and strategy development followed by budgetary decisions has been broken. That has left the defense community in a tenuous position. Many have argued that only the time-honored construct of a two-MTW model will stave off even greater reductions in military strength.¹⁴

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

In light of the pressures caused by the two-MTW model, and the forces and trends anticipated in future military operations, the present era of relative military contraction could be the ideal time to rethink our force structure model. There are several alternative models and remedial measures that may alleviate some of the tension of the "shape, respond, prepare" strategy. This discussion will address three alternative approaches. The first will consider grater integration of the reserve component forces, and possible changes in their roles and missions. The second will suggest a change to the two-MTW paradigm that will allow further investment of funds and forces against emerging threats and challenges. The third will recommend an expanded interpretation of the spirit of the Goldwaters-Nichols Act. In that alternative, the defense community could consolidate and unify selected warfare functions.

THE RESERVE COMPONENT INTEGRATION APPROACH

This reserve component integration approach would assign MOOTW missions to primarily reserve component forces, where the expertise for these type of missions is more prevalent (e.g., civil affairs, PSYOP, military police, and the four great enablers). To date, the re-structuring of the Total Force in the aftermath of the post-Cold War draw-down has shifted the preponderance of the Army's combat

support and combat service support assets to the reserve components. In essence, this mandates the greater integration of the reserve components that several of the recent studies recommend. The argument for this migration is that reserve component forces can better recruit, retain, and sustain those technical and municipal skills rather than the combat arms skills, particularly in light of the transferability of those technical skills to civilian career fields.

Since the commencement of the military drawdown in 1988, and particularly since the 1993

Bottom Up Review (BUR), the United States Army has been required to rely increasingly on Reserve

Component (RC) assets in both the Army National Guard and US Army Reserve to fulfill its roles in the

National Military Strategy. The results of the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and the National

Defense Panel (NDP) Reports both emphasize the need for a greater reliance on fully integrated reserve

component forces in future military strategy. Currently, 45% of the combat arms (CA) structure of the US

Army is in the active component. The remainder, minus 1% in the USAR, is in National Guard divisions

(which are of low value to the combatant commanders due to their late availability dates) and the National

Guard enhanced brigades. However, only 37% of the Army's combat support (CS) assets and only 31%

of its combat service support (CSS) assets are in the Active Component structure.¹⁵

The current percentage of CS and CSS assets in the active force are not only disproportionately small, but this also puts significant strain on the Army's ability to meet the demands of repetitive MOOTW and smaller-scale contingency (SSC) missions.¹⁶ The functions that are in greatest demand from our conventional forces engaged in MOOTW are found in the low density-high demand units of our CS and CSS branches, specifically intelligence, communications, logistics (to include transport), medical services, civil affairs, PSYOP, and military police.

Both the QDR and NDP studies also emphasize that future operations will force a greater reliance on joint, interagency, and coalition operations (with particular emphasis on interagency demands). As we rely more increasingly on coalitions for future operations, the functions that allies will demand most from the US as the price for their participation will, again, be our advanced capabilities in those same low density/ high demand units of our CS and CSS branches. As our military strategy requires us to move toward a more integrated, effective interagency model, the functions that will require greatest integration are these same force enhancement functions found in the low density/ high demand units of our CS and CSS branches. As the QDR points out, the greatest stress in OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO produced by our current "Shape, Prepare, Respond" strategy has been and probably will continue to be borne by these low density/ high demand units.

According to a 1999 GAO study, the Army's risk in its ability to execute the National Military Strategy actually increased between 1996 and 1998, particularly due to shortages in chemical, quartermaster, and transportation assets. This report adds another CS asset (Chemical Corps) to the list of CS and CSS assets critical to the execution of the current NMS. ¹⁷ Furthermore, at the same time that the Army began implementing QDR force reductions, its requirements to support other services increased

by about 25,000 positions, to include requirements for 13,000 more chemical decontamination personnel for Navy and Air Force support. ¹⁸

There is an unfulfilled solution to these shortfalls. Since 1993, The National Guard Bureau has proposed to reconfigure 12 National Guard combat brigades into combat service support (CSS) organizations to maintain the viability of those formations. However, the CS and CSS shortages highlighted in the previously mentioned 1999 GAO study are exacerbated by the fact that those National Guard brigades have not yet been converted, as planned, from combat arms to critically-needed CS and CSS units. To compound that delay, the Army National Guard is now reluctant to proceed with the reorganization of those 12 National Guard brigades until they can determine their future utility/viability under the CSA's new medium brigade concept. The bottom line is that, despite the Army's dramatic shift toward reliance on its Reserve Components in recent years in response to the 1997 QDR and NDP reports, the nature of our missions for the foreseeable future will demand greater numbers and greater availability of CS and CSS assets for active service and deployment.

This suggestion to assign MOOTW missions to primarily reserve component forces, where the expertise for these type of missions is more prevalent, will squarely address the National Defense Panel's call to further integrate reserve component forces. It will also permit "first response" forces to focus on core warfighting competencies. The drawback to this COA is that it may, in effect become a permanent mobilization. As Jeffrey Record points out, "...because MOOTW draw so heavily upon combat support and combat service support, creation of active duty forces dedicated exclusively to their performance may require the transfer of substantial reserve components into permanent active service." 22

Opponents will quickly argue that permanent activation will negatively affect retention of those citizen-soldiers with specific technical and municipal skills. However, after an initial period, the <u>organization</u> will retain the institutional memory needed to carry out those missions while its service members end or begin normal rotation.

Opponents may also argue that this conflicts with the rapidly evolving role of the reserve components in homeland defense. However, if the roles and missions in homeland defense evolve beyond consequence management to more constabulary roles, then MOOTW will not conflict with them. It will complement them.

THE ONE-WAR-PLUS MODEL APPROACH

This alternative would entail a shift to a "one-war-plus" model as proposed by Jeffrey Record, with significant, sustained MOOTW as the "plus." Put the force structure savings toward the development of missions-specific forces and more rapid transformation under the "Prepare now" strategy. As Record points out, "Adoption of a one-plus planning standard should not invite further defense budget cuts because existing and planned forces would still be hard put to do a Korea and Bosnia simultaneously." This argument squarely coincides with the NDP concern over service vulnerability to premature cuts, should one of the two envisioned conflicts evaporate.

The individual services may argue that this runs counter to the requirements for a "full spectrum military" as stated in the QDR and the National Military Strategy. However, "full spectrum military" does not necessarily refer to that capacity in each service, but through the armed forces as a whole. It does not necessarily exclude the development of mission-specific forces trained and equipped to contribute to that full spectrum while sister forces focus on their core warfighting skills and the changes in doctrine, training, equipment, organization, and leadership that true transformation will demand.

Based on the current fluidity in NATO and recent events which may be perceived by our allies and potential adversaries as a "new isolationism", transition to a one-plus construct may cause further instability. Also, as Ippolito argues, the demise of the two-MTW "sizing" function could leave the military extremely vulnerable to even greater budget cuts.²⁵

This course of action will have further merit when the military transformation is further along. At that point, the integration of information revolution technologies should result in significantly smaller units with substantially greater capabilities.

THE FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION APPROACH

Another alternative that may relieve current military pressures and speed the transformation could be called the "functional consolidation" approach. Under this alternative, the defense community would begin consolidation of the four great enablers to realize savings in both field forces and bureaucracy. In essence, this would mean that the armed services are "preparing now" by not only reengineering, but by reorganizing and streamlining the four great enablers, thereby increasing their effectiveness in shaping now and responding when called upon.

This approach has several benefits. It can expedite the unity and efficiency of our armed forces structure. It can increase the responsiveness and effectiveness of intelligence, command and control, logistics, and medical support assets for contingency operations and MOOTW. It can help to resolve the "control" side of the issue of command and control in multinational contingency operations. Consolidation will free up critically needed "faces and spaces" in the force structure to apply toward our 'first response" forces, or it could free up "faces and spaces" to experiment with the concept of specific forces trained and tailored to counter asymmetric threats or MOOTW. Finally, the consolidation of these four great enablers may reduce or eliminate the need for what may best be called "bridge bureaucracies," such as the Defense Logistics Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Information Systems Agency. The military intelligence community in general, and the Defense Intelligence Agency in particular, provide a model example for this course of action.

Throughout the same timeframe that the U.S. conducted its multitude of studies on overall force structure, we produced a simultaneous glut of studies on restructuring of the national intelligence community, to include the military intelligence community, in the post-Cold War era. In a 1990 report, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Senate Armed Services Committee, directed the Secretary of Defense to review DOD intelligence activities and to begin the consolidation of redundancies

"to the maximum degree possible." ²⁶ However, like the defense community in general, the military intelligence community has many vested interests that argue against such consolidation.

According to Jajko, in our era of jointness, the intelligence staffs of service components are still performing redundant tasks that rightfully belong with the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). He believes those staffs should be legislatively reduced in functions and manning.²⁷ But is the DIA redundant in the age of jointness, or is it the future centralizing agency for joint military intelligence at a time when the Joint Staff is looking more and more like a General Staff?

One of the arguments for the continued existence of combat support agencies like the DIA is their perceived role as the "honest broker" among the service components in their functional area. When Secretary of Defense Robert MacNamara directed the establishment of the DIA in 1961, it was precisely for this reason.

Another approach recommends the establishment of a military intelligence czar by empowering the Director DIA as the "Director of Military Intelligence." However, the variety of intelligence functions within DOD, combined with a level of service-specific intelligence requirements, argues against this approach.²⁸

Jajko articulates the true basis for the argument against shifting functions to "bridge bureaucracies" such as the DIA:

"Defense intelligence is, of course, military intelligence. Nevertheless, the office of the ASD [Assistant Secretary of Defense] consists mostly of civilians, and DIA and the services are increasingly composed of civilians. In fact, there is a trend of increasing civilianization of the military intelligence elements with attendant attrition of military operation expertise." ²⁹

"....The trend toward civilianization poses the risk of developing military intelligence organizations whose intelligence officers cannot understand the military uses of intelligence and the military significance of information. The ethos of DIA and the service intelligence elements must not be civilianized to the extent that the agency becomes insentient of the needs of the fighting forces."

In reality, some further consolidation and unification have already been accomplished throughout the 1990s. The reduction of intelligence staffs within the service components of the unified combatant commands and the subsequent consolidation of those "spaces" to create a Joint Intelligence Center in each of the combatant commands are a prime examples. The consolidation of several disparate service human intelligence organizations into the Defense HUMINT Service (DHS) in 1993 is yet another example.

In 1997, the National Defense Panel Report recommended the establishment of new and expanded specified commands to integrate or subordinate the functions of combat support agencies. Perhaps it is time to establish new specified or functional commands that would assume the functions currently performed by combat support agencies like the DIA.

Opponents will use a key point of both the CORM and the NDP to argue against this and that is the case for "healthy competition." They will contend that this interservice competition is a great contributor to determining how best to exploit new capabilities and deal with emerging challenges.³² Furthermore, the key re-occurring point that argues against further consolidation or unification of military intelligence is the same issue that causes the greatest friction in the post-Goldwater-Nichols service component versus JCS/combatant command arena. That is the issue of service Title 10 responsibility to support force modernization and training. However, It seems clear from the findings of both the CORM and the NDP that their members were addressing this in the context of core warfighting competencies. In addressing this matter since his participation in the CORM, DEPSECDEF John White has stated, "...they [the services] have principal responsibility for research, development, test, and evaluation of weapons systems for their individual mediums, as well as for developing and articulating innovative concepts for their employment." 33 Again, it appears that, when it comes to preserving specific service roles and complementary warfighting capabilities, these studies were referring specifically to the pointy end of the spear. Further, the CORM specifically set the precedent for consolidation of some service functions, particularly combat support and combat service support functions.³⁴ The NDP recommendations for adjustments to the Unified Command Plan may set the stage for consolidation of great enabler functions and the declining necessity for "bridge bureaucracies." 35

IMPLICATIONS

Throughout these arguments, there are three continuous strands or links: the continuing pervasiveness of MOOTW and coalition operations, the need for greater integration of Reserve Component capabilities, and the universal demand on the four great enablers. These strands or links cause the recommended courses of action to be complementary in more ways than they are distinct. In summary, we need to review some key questions related to force structure required for our current and future strategy:

What are the functions that are in greatest demand from our conventional forces engaged in MOOTW?

As we rely more increasingly on coalitions for future operations, what are the functions that allies will demand most from the US as the price for their participation?

What are the functions that require greatest integration in order to move toward a more integrated, effective interagency model?

What are the functions that exist in higher densities in the Reserve Component?

The answer to all of these questions lies in the four great enablers: Intelligence, communications, logistics (to include transport), and medical services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continued uncertainty regarding both future threats and budgets will probably drive the armed forces to sustain the two-MTW construct until clear benchmarks for the military transformation have been

set and met. In the meantime, the services must continue to rely on a mix of rotational active and reserve component forces to provide critical combat support and combat service support functions for MOOTW. However, it may be time to direct the permanent activation of selected low density/high demand units, such as military police, civil affairs, PSYOP, and military traffic management. Simultaneously, both the uniformed services and the defense community should begin consolidation of intelligence, communications, logistics (to include transport), and medical service functions.

To stave off service component opposition, either Office of the Secretary of Defense or Congress may need to assign overall responsibility for each function to a selected service component. This would be a step beyond the current "executive agent" duties that some services hold in specific functional areas. This will also preclude the onset of a "civilian in uniform" or technician mentality as these unified functions evolve. As previously suggested, the defense community may need to agree on the establishment of new specified or "functional" commands to unify these functions.

The groundwork has already been laid for activation of reserve component units. As the concept of homeland defense takes shape, it will put more demands on the core warfighting missions of the Reserves, and less on their technical and municipal skills. In homeland defense, those capabilities will come from local and federal government agencies.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the 1990's, the U.S. armed forces have diligently executed the national military strategy the supports our national security strategy of "engagement and enlargement." However, it appears that the services have been forced to focus on the "shape" and "respond" aspects of that military strategy at the expense of "preparing now" for the challenges and threats of the future. "Preparing now" means getting on with the transformation process that is critical to the future utility of the U.S. military. Retaining the two-MTW model will continue to inhibit that transformation to a degree. However, implementation of these recommendations will reduce some of the tension between "shaping", "responding", and "preparing." It will also clearly signal that an innovative process has begun.

Word Count = 4771 Words

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- ³² U.S. Department of Defense, <u>Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review</u>, 58 and 69, AND U.S. Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, <u>Directions for Defense</u>; <u>Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces</u>. (Arlington, Virginia, May 1995), i.
 - ³³ John P. White, "Defense Organization Today," <u>Joint Force Quarterly</u> 13 (Autumn 1996), 19.
- ³⁴ U.S. Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, <u>Directions for Defense; Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces</u>, ES-5.

³⁵ National Defense Panel, 71-73.

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